GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EARTH SCIENCES
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:41
ANSWERED ON:02.12.2015
Earthquakes
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Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of seismic tremors reported during the current year so far along with their intensity, location-wise and the loss of life and property reported therein;
(b) whether the Government has conducted any study about increasing incidents of earthquakes and constituted a committee to study and analyse the movement of Indian tectonic plate and if so, the details and outcome thereof;
(c) whether the Government is taking assistance from Japan and other foreign countries to study the same and if so, the details thereof; and
(d) the steps taken by the Government to minimise the damage due to earthquakes of high intensity?

Answer

The MINISTER FOR MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND
MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES
(DR. HARSH VARDHAN)

(a) to (d): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE LOK SABHA IN REPLY (a) to (d) TO STARRED QUESTION NO. *41 REGARDING "EARTHQUAKES"TO BE ANSWERED ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 02, 2015

(a) During the current year so far, 392 earthquakes of magnitude greater than 3, have been located by the seismological network maintained and operated by Earth System Science Organisation-National Centre for Seismology (ESSO-NCS). Details are given in Annexure-I. However, a total of 136 earthquakes have occurred over India in the current year so far; out of which 114 events have occurred in Zone-V, 14 numbers in Zone-IV, 5 in Zone-III and 3 in Zone-II, respectively.

In the current year, 25 April 2015 Nepal earthquake and its aftershocks caused loss of life and property in Indian territory also. 102 deaths have been reported (Bihar-79; Uttar Pradesh-19; West Bengal-3; and Rajasthan-1) and about 13,000 houses were reported damaged. The maximum loss of life and damage to property occurred in Bihar. It is estimated that the housing property of Rs.140 lakh was damaged in Bihar. 4 deaths have been reported in Jammu & Kashmir due to the 26 October 2015 Afghanistan earthquake.

(b) Analysis of past 30 years of earthquake data suggests that there is no increase or decrease in seismicity rate. Although no committee has been constituted to study and analyze the movement of Indian tectonic plate, several institutes along with ESSO-NCS, New Delhi like National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI) Hyderabad, Fourth Paradigm Institute Bangalore, Indian Institute of Geomagnetism (IIG) Mumbai, Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG) Dehradun, etc. are involved in institutional studies. Studies have also revealed that Indian plate moves at the rate of about 5 cm/year towards northeast.

(c) There is a mechanism of international sharing of information on earthquakes between several countries including Japan, as such no specific assistance is taken from any country.

(d) Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has published several guidelines and building codes for construction of earthquake resistant structures and for retrofitting of existing buildings. These guidelines are in wide circulation amongst the public and the administrative authorities responsible for the design and construction of earthquake resistant structures in earthquake prone areas.

National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Ministry of Earth Sciences and other state Disaster Management Authorities, have also taken up various initiatives to educate and enhance awareness amongst general public and school children on the general aspects of earthquakes, their impacts and measures to mitigate losses caused by them. A National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) is also functional under the general superintendence, direction and control of the NDMA for the purpose of specialized response to natural and man-made disasters.

Markets, schools, hospitals and Railway and Bus stations, airports etc. are regularly sensitized by organising mock drills and information dissemination relating to evacuation and steps to be taken during rescue and relief operations.